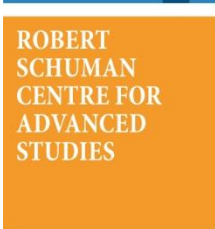




European
University
Institute



ROBERT
SCHUMAN
CENTRE FOR
ADVANCED
STUDIES

WORKING PAPERS

RSCAS 2015/53
Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies
Global Governance Programme-177

Latin American declaratory regionalism:
An analysis of presidential discourse (1994-2014)

Nicole Jenne and Luis Schenoni

European University Institute
Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies
Global Governance Programme

**Latin American declaratory regionalism:
An analysis of presidential discourse (1994-2014)**

Nicole Jenne and Luis Schenoni

EUI Working Paper **RSCAS** 2015/53

This text may be downloaded only for personal research purposes. Additional reproduction for other purposes, whether in hard copies or electronically, requires the consent of the author(s), editor(s). If cited or quoted, reference should be made to the full name of the author(s), editor(s), the title, the working paper, or other series, the year and the publisher.

ISSN 1028-3625

© Nicole Jenne and Luis Schenoni, 2015

Printed in Italy, July 2015

European University Institute

Badia Fiesolana

I – 50014 San Domenico di Fiesole (FI)

Italy

www.eui.eu/RSCAS/Publications/

www.eui.eu

cadmus.eui.eu

Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies

The Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (RSCAS), created in 1992 and directed by Professor Brigid Laffan, aims to develop inter-disciplinary and comparative research on the major issues facing the process of European integration, European societies and Europe's place in 21st century global politics.

The Centre is home to a large post-doctoral programme and hosts major research programmes, projects and data sets, in addition to a range of working groups and *ad hoc* initiatives. The research agenda is organised around a set of core themes and is continuously evolving, reflecting the changing agenda of European integration, the expanding membership of the European Union, developments in Europe's neighbourhood and the wider world.

Details of the research of the Centre can be found on:
<http://www.eui.eu/RSCAS/Research/>

Research publications take the form of Working Papers, Policy Papers, and e-books. Most of these are also available on the RSCAS website:
<http://www.eui.eu/RSCAS/Publications/>

The EUI and the RSCAS are not responsible for the opinions expressed by the author(s).

The Global Governance Programme at the EUI

The Global Governance Programme is one of the flagship programmes of the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies at the European University Institute (EUI). It aims to: build a community of outstanding professors and scholars, produce high quality research and, engage with the world of practice through policy dialogue. At the Global Governance Programme, established and early career scholars research, write on and discuss, within and beyond academia, issues of global governance, focussing on four broad and interdisciplinary areas: European, Transnational and Global Governance; Global Economics; Europe in the World; and Cultural Pluralism.

The Programme also aims to contribute to the fostering of present and future generations of policy and decision makers through its unique executive training programme, the Academy of Global Governance, where theory and "real world" experience meet. At the Academy, executives, policy makers, diplomats, officials, private sector professionals and academics, have the opportunity to meet, share views and debate with leading academics, top-level officials, heads of international organisations and senior executives, on topical issues relating to governance.

For more information: <http://globalgovernanceprogramme.eui.eu>

Abstract

If the idea of an integrated Latin America goes back to the early post-colonial days, the story of political and economic integration in Latin America is relatively quickly told. The attempts have been numerous, but in terms of policy outcomes and deep integration for the benefit of a regional public good, regionalism in Latin America has not lived up to the stated aims of its governments. The present paper takes a first step to examine the practice of referring to Latin America in the political discourse, a phenomenon that we term declaratory regionalism to denote its independence from substantial forms of regionalism. We analyse the use of declarationism in presidential speeches delivered on an annual basis to the UN General Assembly in two steps. First, we discuss a series of descriptive illustrations in light of existing scholarship on Latin American international relations. Subsequently, several hypotheses for why governments keep referring to the region while not necessarily privileging it in their foreign policy strategies are put to a test. While not offering a conclusive explanation, the results point to leftist ideology as a crucial factor in explaining the persistence of discursive regionalism at the UN General Assembly. The paper posits that future research is likely to benefit from conceiving Latin Americanism as a characteristic of leftist ideology.

Keywords

Latin America, regionalism, discursive practice.

1. Introduction*

Regional integration is an idea as old as Latin America's states themselves. Integration efforts have undergone a number of ups and downs, each of them accompanied by fervent enthusiasm, only to crackle sooner or later with a long list of pledges to deeper integration remaining unfulfilled. The failure of living up to the stated aims of governments and the representatives of a full panoply of regional institutions has been subject to scrutiny by several scholars (Domínguez 2007; Malamud and Gardini 2012; Rojas Aravena 2010). Noting a surprising persistence of regionalist discourse and new initiatives in spite of recurring setbacks, some set out to address the notable "resilience and consistency of the institutional arrangements [...]; the mismatch between scope and level of integration; and poor policy outcomes" head on (Dabène 2009: 24). This paper adds to the debate with a content analysis of presidential discourse that seeks to uncover the "semantic macrostructure" (Neuendorf 2002: 8) and possible causes of Latin America's declaratory regionalism, understood as *the act of discursively referring to regional organizations, regional identities, and/or the macro and micro-regions the Latin American countries see themselves as being part of*. It analyses the presidential speeches delivered on part of eleven Latin American states at the annual opening sessions of the United Nations' General Assembly (UNGA) to capture how, when and why presidents talk about regionalism when laying out their key foreign policy strategies.

The period of analysis spans the years 1994 to 2014, which saw what some called a paradigm shift from 'open' regionalism based on a neoliberal trade agenda to a new, politically oriented integration agenda led by a number of leftist governments (Sanahuja 2009; Riggiorozzi y Tussie 2012). While ever since there has certainly been no shortage of dynamism on Latin America's regional scene, real progress in deepening integration has remained elusive. Whether multilateral collaboration in the region has produced a net benefit is far from clear, and yet, regional imaginaries form undoubtedly part of Latin America's political, social and cultural life, including political discourse in general and presidential foreign policy discourse in particular.

Regional studies have obliterated the presence of a Latin-Americanist discourse as a characteristic feature of regional politics in this particular set of countries. Latin America's institutional conglomerate of "coexisting and competing projects with fuzzy boundaries" (Tussie 2009: 170) may once have appeared puzzling from a European-style inspired view on regional integration. However, international institutions in developing regions generally take the form of free trade areas, regularized summits of heads of states or inter-governmental organizations that tend to reinforce sovereignty rather than to undermine it. In such cases, the study of declaratory regionalism as a phenomenon distinct from integration or cooperation, even if only ceremonially performed (Montecinos 1996), seems to be especially relevant since words not always imply deeds.

Building on Ayoob, 'third world' regionalism can thus be understood as a "subaltern" regionalism between a number of countries grouping together to cooperate to meet similar domestic challenges (ibid. 1998; note: cooperate, not integrate). Contrary to expectations from (neo)functionalist theories, regionalism in Latin America also did not propel integration (Malamud and Schenoni 2015). The reasons why Latin American countries cooperate instead of integrating have been subject to considerable debate, yet we know little about why Latin American governments talk much about something they typically avoid.

Not only is declaratory regionalism different from cooperation or integration. In fact, it must also have different causes, which account for the gap that generally exists between what is said and what is done with regards to regionalism in Latin America. While making statements is an exercise of

* Feedback by three anonymous and one additional reviewer helped to improve an earlier version of this paper and will profit our work in progress. We thank them for their detailed and constructive comments.

relatively low cost, it is remarkable that governments have thought it necessary to make an average of more than four allusions to the region in each of the speeches delivered to the UNGA over twenty-one years.

Moreover, declaratory regionalism is central for a constructivist understanding of foreign policy in Latin America. Even if policy statements not always reflect reality – e.g. the signing of actual treaties – and may contain strategic lies, bluffing or partial display of information (Mearsheimer 2011), from a constructivist standpoint, speeches are all but cost-free since they have normative implications which condition future action. In the words of a significant contributor to this paradigm: “In the absence of evidence to the contrary, highly formal policy statements, as declaration of intention, *are* policies” (Onuf 2001: 92, italics in the original), and therefore must be taken seriously.

This paper seeks to shed light on who in the region talks about exactly what, and to interrogate a possible set of explanations for discursive regionalism. It proceeds as follows. The second section describes the data and discusses the approach. The third and fourth parts provide a series of descriptive statistics on declaratory regionalism, which unpack variation across countries, contents, and throughout the time period considered. The findings are contrasted with some of the mainstream hypotheses on Latin American international politics, showing that the proposed measure of declarationism is in line with the expectations of regional experts with regards to these countries’ discourse. The fifth part seeks an explanation for the puzzle. Section 5 develops several hypotheses, which are put to a test in a linear regression. The significance of the results is modest, but nevertheless they allow inferring a number of conclusions regarding Latin America’s declaratory regionalism. Most importantly, the analysis identifies regime ideology as a factor meriting closer scrutiny. Possible explanations are discussed that sketch the way for future research before section 6 concludes.

2. Measuring declaratory regionalism

Executives generally play the leading part in defining foreign policy strategies, and Latin American presidents have exceptionally wide-ranging competences if compared to other executive powers in democratic regimes (Shugart and Carey 1992; O’Donell 1994). The region’s ‘summitry’ (Feinberg 2006) is exemplary for the decisive influence of Latin American presidents in the process of foreign policy making (Malamud 2005; Schenoni 2015), which positions them as the central actors employing – or avoiding – declaratory regionalism.

The presidential statements delivered at the opening sessions of the UNGA are a rich source to understand change and continuity in foreign policy. During September each year, every country represented at the UN delivers a speech to the world community synthesizing its foreign policy priorities. Since the statements are addressed to other governments but also broadcasted to local and global audiences, the occasion provides an exceptional opportunity for leaders to use declaratory regionalism as both a domestic and foreign policy tool. Even when presidents send a deputy, the address is usually given in the name of the head of state and outlines the main foreign policy objectives of the incumbent administration. By analysing the yearly speeches at the UNGA, it is thus possible to obtain a broad picture of Latin America’s declaratory regionalism over the past twenty years.

To obtain a measure for declaratory regionalism, this paper counts the number of references that were made during a single speech at the UNGA - i.e. a country-year unit of analysis – to the following set of words:

Table 1. Words considered in a frequency analysis

Regional Organization	OAS	CEPAL	CELAC	UNASUR	CARICOM	ALBA	MERCOSUR
Region and Sub-region	Hemisphere	Latin America		South America	Caribbean	Andean Region	Southern Cone
Regional Identities	Hemispheric	Latin American		South American	Caribbean	Andean	Indigenous
Other words	Americas	Region	Sub-region	Integrate	Regionalism	Continental	

The words in Table 1 – and words with the same stem and different suffix, e.g. region/regional or Latin American/Latin-Americanism, etc. – were identified and analysed with regard to their frequency in a total of 231 speeches. These were the speeches delivered by the major eleven countries in Latin America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela) during 21 years between 1994 and 2014.

This methodological approach has a series of advantages and disadvantages. Speech analysis is an unobtrusive technique that can handle a large amount of unstructured data (Krippendorff 2004: 41-43). The 231 statements analysed here represent how presidents stood towards regionalism at the time the speeches were delivered, without responding to a set of predetermined questions or being asked to take a position towards regionalism per se. Furthermore, the fact of being delivered at the same time, in the same forum and by chiefs of state themselves – or deputies directly representing them –, the analysis of UNGA speeches show great advantages in terms of comparability.

On the downside, taken as a sole indicator, the UNGA speeches certainly provide a somewhat superficial account of how governments perceive their region. This is so for three main reasons. First, the UNGA is not the only and arguably not the most important venue where governments make foreign policy statements. Second, some speeches are lengthier than others and hence apparent interest in the region may be a product of plain verbosity.¹ Most importantly, the present analysis does not capture the context, so some statements may refer to the region in negative terms while others may do so in neutral or positive terms. Understanding these nuances would require further research and the use of other techniques. However, given that such a research agenda has not been pursued so far, we hope that even a limited approach will compensate for these shortcomings with the benefit of parsimony and transparency.

On balance, it is important to recognize that the UNGA speeches are only one indicator for the workings of regionalism in Latin America, and one not free from limitations. It is undisputable, however, that the mere act of referring to the region in a presidential speech demonstrates some interest in the subject, since governments could choose not to talk about it. To the authors' best knowledge no attempt of systematically assessing data on Latin America's declaratory regionalism has been undertaken so far, and the goal of the next sections is therefore to draw a number of conclusions building on a range of descriptive and inferential statistics.

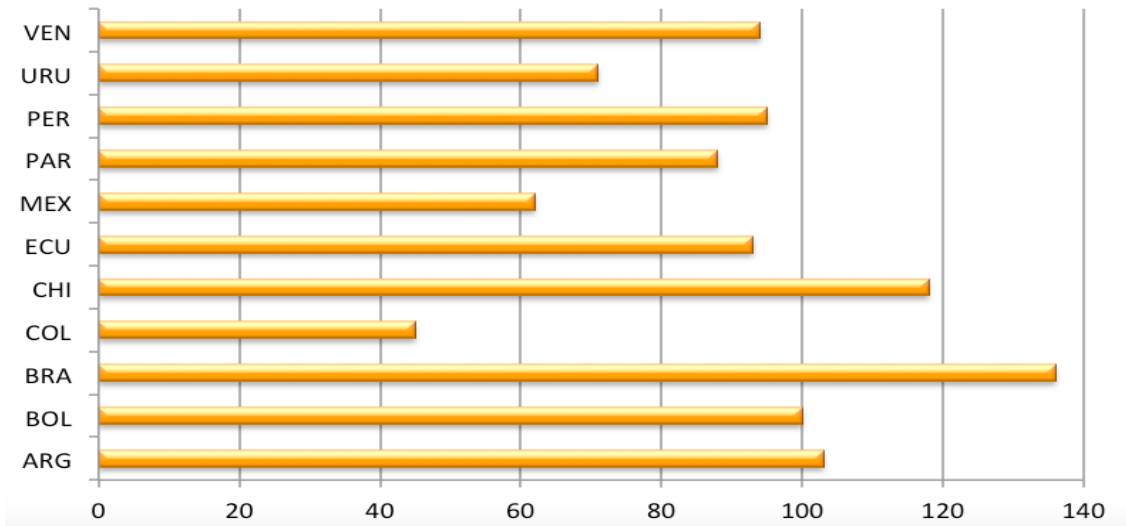
3. Declaratory regionalism at the UNGA: Who talks about what?

As figure 1 shows, certain countries are more prone to develop a regional discourse than others. In accordance with Colombia's scepticism regarding South American initiatives (Flemes 2012) and Mexico's geographic distance, these are the two countries that refer the less to their region. In this context, it is worth noting that Colombia appears to attach particular value to the annual UNGA

¹ Argentina's Fernando de la Rúa performed the shortest intervention with a 695-word discourse in 2000, while Mexico's president Felipe Calderón pronounced the longest statement of 5,918 words in 2012.

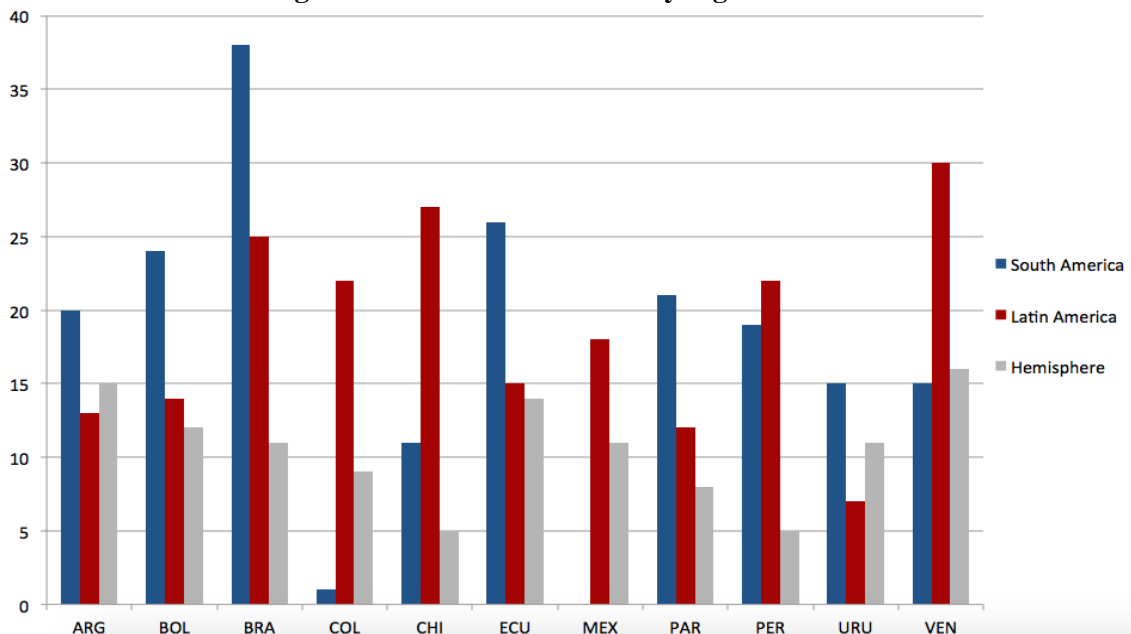
meetings. Among the eleven countries analysed, Colombia was the only one represented by the president personally at each meeting since 1994, and not by a deputy. On the other extreme, Brazil has made most allusions to the region, which may be seen as an expression of its interest to assume a leadership role for South and Latin America on the global stage (Lima 2013; Burges 2015).

Figure 1. Number of allusions to regionalism by country (1994-2014)



Consistent with the patchwork nature of Latin American regionalism outlined above, it is also obvious from the data that not every country refers to the same region. Regions are malleable and open (Buzan and Wæver 2003; Nolte 2011), and depending on their geographic situation and their economic and political interests, each country builds its regional discourse around different clusters. Figure 2 shows how often each president has referred to the following macro-regions: South America, Latin America, and the Hemisphere.

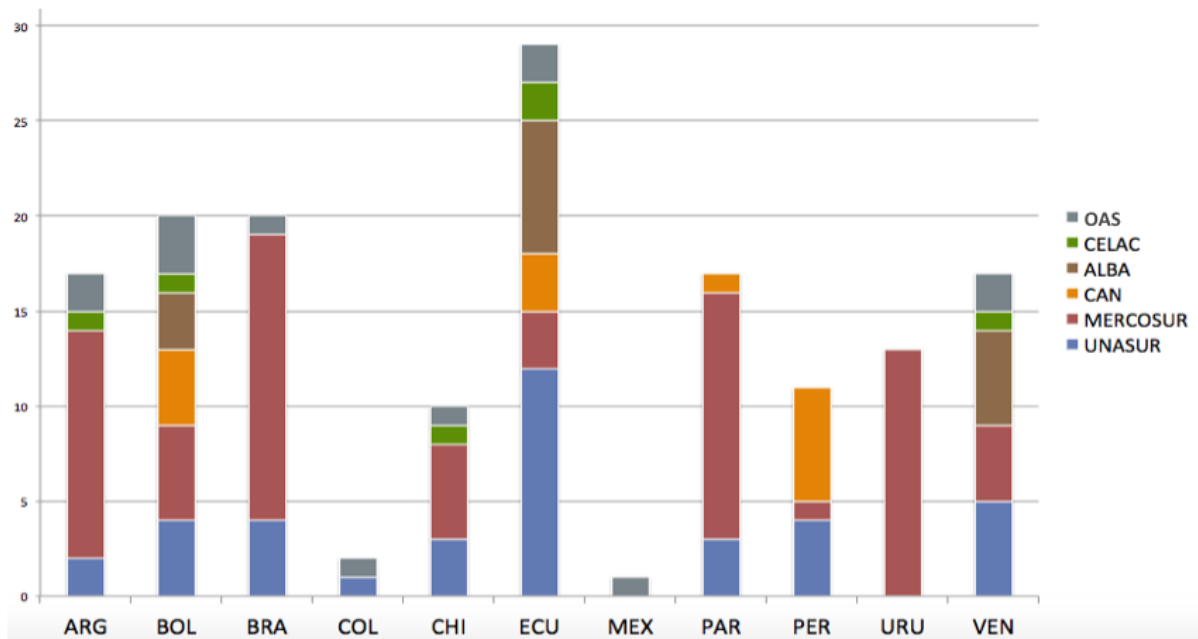
Figure 2. Number of allusions by regional cluster



Not surprisingly, four of the five Southern Cone countries (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay) refer mainly to the South American sub-region. The founding members of MERCOSUR, these countries refer to South America more often than their northern neighbours, which are more proximate to North America and therefore more strongly influenced by the United States in terms of trade, investment and aid.² Brazil stands out from the group as it almost doubles the average number of references to South America made by its peers. This highlights the Brazilian origin of the concept in (Moniz Bandeira 2006) and Brasilia's interest in promoting it (Teixeira 2012). The countries that have sought to limit Brazil's influence in the region, including the fifth country in the Southern Cone, Chile, as well as Colombia (Schenoni 2015) and Venezuela (Flemes and Wehner 2015), in turn, tended to avoid the use of the concept. As a way of discursive contestation, they preferred to refer more broadly to Latin America instead, although Chavez's Venezuela would later incorporate the South American discourse as well (Chodor & McCathy-Jones 2013).

If read in conjunction with the data from figure 1, it is evident that Chile, second only to Brazil in its declarationist practice at the General Assembly, has been actively contesting Brazilian primacy on the regional scene. This claim is supported by a breakdown of references according to individual regional institutions, which is depicted in figure 3.

Figure 3. Allusions to regional organizations by country (1994-2014)

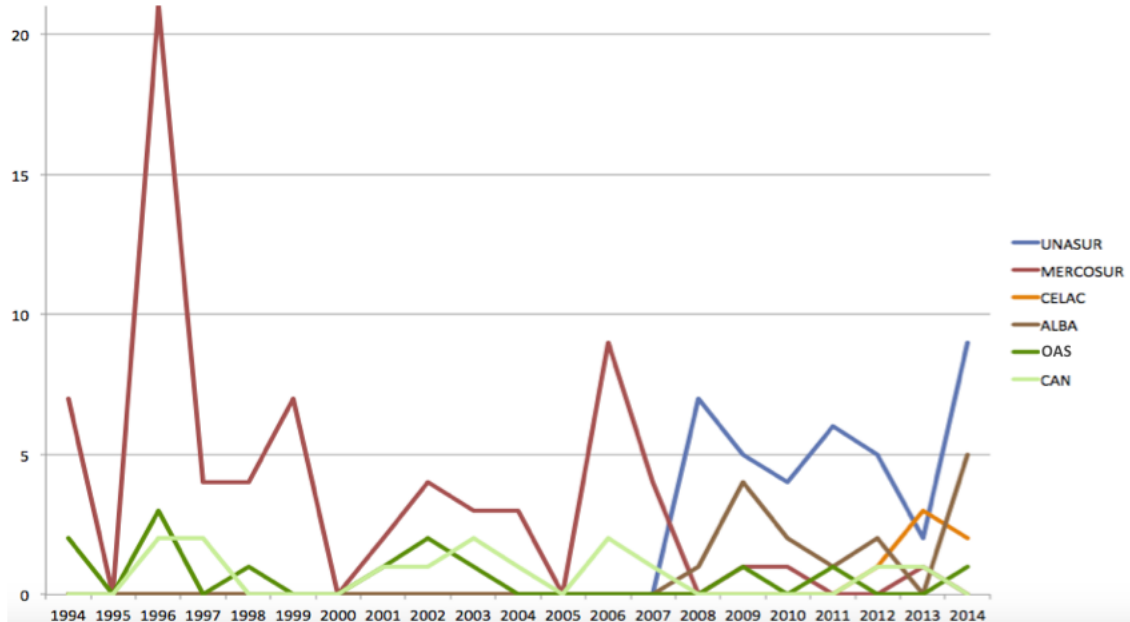


Overall, countries that talk much about the region do not necessarily refer to institutions, and Chile, in fact, alluded comparatively little to existing organizations. From the data presented in figure 3 Ecuador and Bolivia stand out as the only two countries whose addresses at the UNGA included reference to all six regional institutions analysed here. Their discursive regionalism appears consistent with both countries' foreign policy strategies to increase and diversify their participation in international

² This is evident from data on bilateral aid found at the *U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants Greenbook* (<https://eads.usaid.gov>); FDI data from the *U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and World Bank data* (<http://data.worldbank.org>), and data on trade in annual share of exports, which are provided at *Trademap* (<http://www.trademap.org>) [last accessed on 17 March, 2015].

organizations (Garzón 2015: 23-24). The members of MERCOSUR³, in turn, commented primarily on this trade bloc and increasingly on UNASUR (see figure 4), but were not prone to mentioning other institutions.

Figure 4. Allusions to regional organizations by year



The curve of references to Mercosur as shown in figure 4 reflects the trajectory of the trading bloc from initially high expectations to its near political stand-still following the Brazilian devaluation in 1999 (Malamud 2005; Onuki 2006). A breeze of fresh air arrived with the new idea of a “social MERCOSUR” and the membership request of Venezuela (Christensen 2007: 156), but since the late-2000s the plans to establish a common market have remained in the holding stack. Instead, new organizations like UNASUR and ALBA gained political relevance in the presidential discourses. With the exception of a brief flirt with CELAC in 2013, since 2008 UNASUR and ALBA were the two institutions most frequently referred to.

It is noteworthy that the Organization of American States (OAS), the oldest and only institution that includes the United States, does not feature prominently in the speeches. Reflecting the ambiguous relation the Latin American states have long had with their great power to the north, it shows a similarly low, but stable record to the much smaller Andean Community (CAN). This sheds some doubts on earlier research that suggested UNASUR might be replacing the OAS in the regional strategy of the South American states (Weiffen et.al. 2013). At least with regard to discourse, UNASUR appears to be counterweighing the lack of enthusiasm with MERCOSUR.

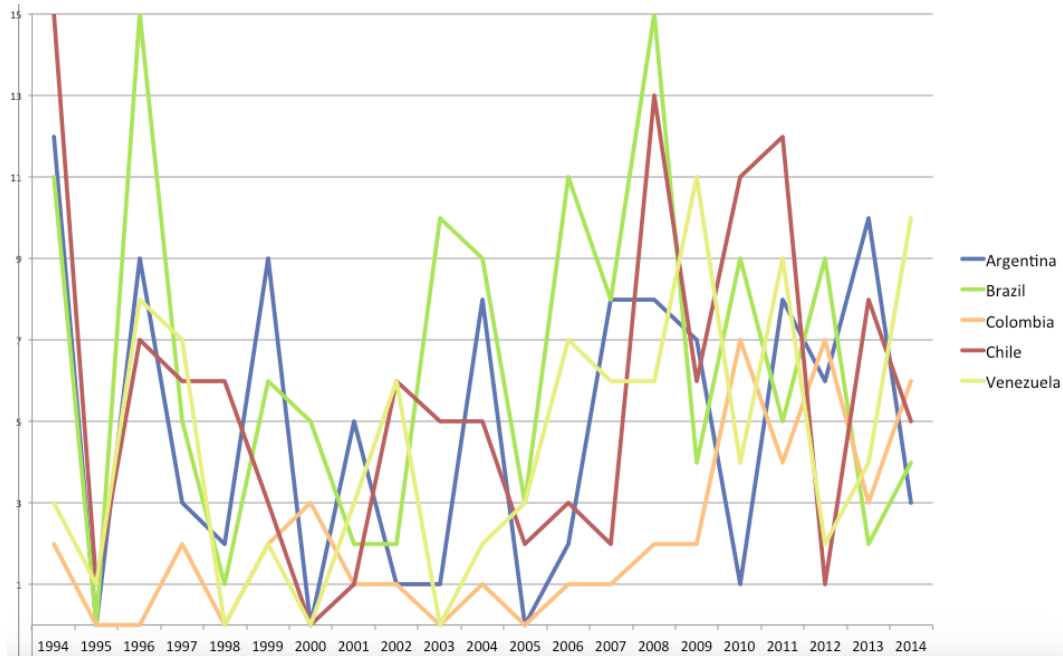
So far, the data from Latin American speeches at the UNGA have shown to be consistent with several patterns that are found in the region’s international politics. If this interpretation is correct and the presidential statements are indeed reflective of foreign policy strategies including regional integration, its discursive enactment should vary over time. Before venturing into a possible explanation for Latin America’s declaratory regionalism, the following section deals with its overall use at the UNGA.

³ These are Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela. The latter however acceded to Mercosur only in 2012. Bolivia signed the protocol for full membership in 2012, but is pending ratification.

4. Declaratory regionalism at the UNGA: Correlations and long term trends

For the sake of simplicity, figure 5 shows the use of declaratory regionalism by the six biggest Latin American countries only.

Figure 5. Declaratory regionalism in five South American countries



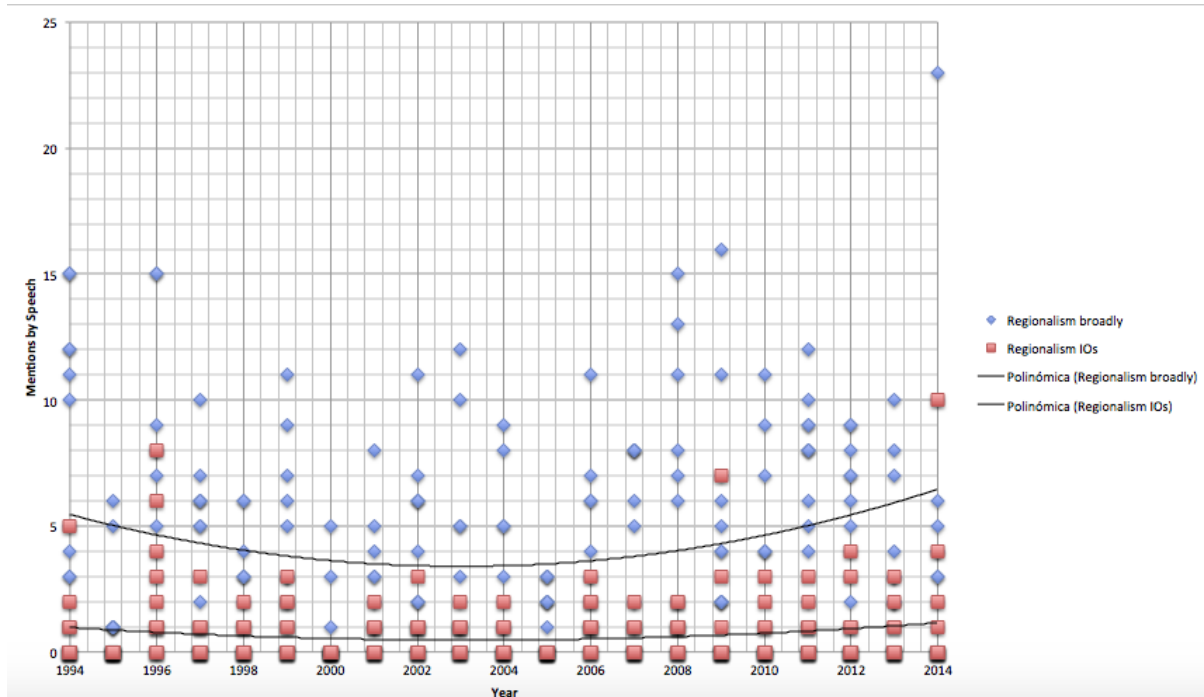
Even so, it is difficult to discern clear patterns from the rather messy graph. Of few conclusions the data allow to draw, what sticks out is the fact that the presidents tend to coincide in their use of discursive regionalism in a temporal dimension. Table 2 correlates all regional allusions on a country-to-country basis and highlights those in green colour that are positively associated and correlated with a value above .3. While there are twenty-one significant positive correlations, only two statistically significant negative correlations (highlighted in orange) are found.

Table 2. Pearson correlation for declaratory regionalism (1994-2014)

	ARG	BOL	BRA	COL	CHI	ECU	MEX	PAR	PER	URU
ARG	1									
BOL	0,45	1								
BRA	0,39	0,49	1							
COL	0,06	-0,08	0,07	1						
CHI	0,47	0,44	0,39	0,19	1					
ECU	-0,01	-0,02	-0,29	0,49	-0,03	1				
MEX	0,38	0,26	0,01	0,14	0,05	-0,07	1			
PAR	0,59	0,43	0,27	-0,00	0,67	-0,02	0,48	1		
PER	0,02	-0,14	0,03	-0,13	0,11	-0,15	0,21	0,14	1	
URU	0,49	0,53	0,37	-0,33	0,21	-0,32	0,34	0,44	0,35	1
VEN	0,26	0,36	0,14	0,20	0,31	0,51	0,00	0,26	-0,02	0,02

A second inference that can be drawn from the overall use of declaratory regionalism are its discernible peaks with regards to both the mentioning of regionalism, broadly speaking, and the allusion to regional institutions. Figure 6 suggests an association between regime creation, on the one hand, and the practice of declaratory regionalism, on the other. Even if a gap allegedly exists between what is said and what is done – and even between what is signed and what is done (Gardini 2011, 247) –, it would seem that presidents talk more about the region when institutions are being or were recently created. However, this claim receives no support in the inferential analysis developed in the next section.

Figure 6. Declaratory regionalism by speech and year



Secondly, the two-peaked distribution of declaratory regionalism in Figure 6 suggests that we should rethink the hypotheses that link declaratory regionalism to democratization (Oelsner 2005), the US’s decline (Ruggirozzi and Tussie 2012), and the rise of Brazil (Borges 2015), since these phenomena have been linear during the period under consideration. What then causes governments to refer to the region in whatever abstract terms in their yearly speeches at the UNGA? The following section discusses several plausible answers and interrogates them in a linear regression model.

5. Hypothesizing the causes of declaratory regionalism

The following hypotheses are derived from the literature on political-security regionalism and regionalism studies on Latin America. All follow an explanatory logic working at the domestic and the regional international level, and are expected to determine the foreign policy strategies underpinning Latin America’s declaratory regionalism for two reasons. On the one hand, minor powers are first and foremost concerned with their immediate neighbours and devise their foreign policies accordingly (Lake and Morgan 1997: 5). Secondly, for most countries in the region internal stability is still the major concern.

Accordingly, the first hypothesis holds:

H1. Governments foster a regionalist discourse when faced with domestic instability.

Over the two decades under consideration, Latin America's presidencies were vulnerable to internal competitors challenging their authority, a risk that led to prolonged periods of instability in several cases (Pérez Liñan 2007; Llanos and Marsteintredet 2010). When facing complicated domestic situations, governments frequently sought regional support from organizations like the OAS, Mercosur and UNASUR, which dispose of mechanisms to support democracy in the member states by applying international pressure (Nolte et. al. 2013). It is therefore plausible to expect governments referring to the region at the UNGA when presidents are facing domestic crises. The most obvious signs for presidential crises are popular protest and mass demonstrations (Pérez Liñan 2010). Data on "anti-government activity" are therefore included in the regression model from the Democracy Barometer⁴. These count (a) the number of public gatherings of more than 100 people displaying their opposition to the government and (b) the number of strikes of 1,000 or more industrial or service workers in any given year.

Somewhat contrarily, in international crises the Latin American countries have traditionally relied on ad hoc mechanisms and groupings of states rather than formal regional institutions. However, in recent inter-state crises such as between Ecuador and Peru and Colombia and Venezuela, respectively, the OAS, UNASUR or other regional groupings such as the Rio Group were used as a forum to diffuse tensions.

Domínguez et.al. pointedly described the Latin American security architecture as one creating moral hazard: "The peacekeeping norms, procedures, and institutions in inter-American relations [...] insure each member-state against the likelihood of protracted warfare. States can behave recklessly, militarizing disputes to serve domestic political objectives, certain that international agents will stop the fighting" (ibid. 2003: 6, 14; see also Malamud and Schenoni 2015). However, it is also true that when these crises occur, governments often recur to the region in the search of external support or mediation. Hence,

H2. Presidents foster a regionalist discourse when involved in inter-state militarized disputes.

To test this hypothesis, data from the Correlates of War Militarized Interstate Disputes (MID) database were gathered that account for the involvement of Latin American countries in external conflict between 1994 and 2012 (Ghosn et.al. 2004).

Alternatively, declaratory regionalism may reflect national election cycles. Presidents who either seek re-election or are involved in an electoral campaign in a one-year period after the UNGA plenary sessions can use this platform to reinforce their personal image and gain international support from other leaders and the international public opinion.

H3. Presidents use declaratory regionalism if presidential elections are to take place in the following one-year period.

Following the same logic, presidents could also try to bolster their international and domestic support in a context of decaying presidential image.

H4. Presidents use declaratory regionalism if presidential image is declining.

Data on "confidence in the government" was also borrowed from the Democracy Barometer as a proxy of presidential image.

Amongst domestic constituencies, idea of a *patria grande* (the greater motherland) has traditionally been a strong current especially in Latin American leftist ideology and culture, mostly under the frame of Latin-Americanism (Beverley 2011). Spanning not only politics but also literature and arts, Latin-Americanism has had a strong stand in the most progressive electorate, which appropriated the regional discourse as part of a mostly anti-American, anti-capitalist intellectual tradition (Corrales and

⁴ Data available at: <http://www.democracybarometer.org/> [last accessed on 17 March, 2015].

Feinberg 1999). As noticed by Olivier Dabène “the leftist discourse is ambiguous to the extent that it uses integration as an instrument to defend the sovereignty of these countries against the threat of imperialism” (2012: 367). These narratives are at the heart of what José Antonio Sanahuja has called “post-liberal” regionalism, “a summit diplomacy with high political profile and media exposure which, besides its integrationist discourse constitutes, above all, a frame for south-south cooperation” (2009: 29 [translated by the authors]).

If media exposure and inflationist discourse characterize Latin America’s “post-liberal” regionalism, we should expect leftist presidents to be more prone to declaratory regionalism than their counterparts from the centre and the right of the political spectrum.⁵ Hence,

H5. Declaratory regionalism is more often used by leftist presidents in the UNGA.

Another, fairly obvious hypothesis included as a control is that the discursive regionalism increases at the very moment a new international organization is created. Governments may want to promote the new framework, or simply announce its coming into existence to an international audience. Therefore:
H6. Governments refer to the region when a new regime is launched.

As with H4, regime launch is included in the dataset as a dummy variable that takes value 1 if the country begins its membership in a newly created or already existing regional organization in that year.

Finally, the model considers another dummy variable accounting for whether a country is represented at the UNGA by the president in person or by a deputy.

⁵ For the present analysis, based on Levitsky and Roberts (2013), the following presidents were considered to be leftist: Néstor Kirchner (Argentina), Cristina Fernández (Argentina), Luiz Inácio “Lula” da Silva (Brazil), Dilma Rousseff (Brazil), Evo Morales (Bolivia), Eduardo Frei (Chile), Ricardo Lagos (Chile), Michelle Bachelet (Chile), Rafael Correa (Ecuador), Fernando Lugo (Paraguay), Ollanta Humala (Peru), Tabaré Vázquez (Uruguay), José Mujica (Uruguay) and Hugo Chávez (Venezuela).

Results

A linear regression on panel data explores the relation between talk about the region in the yearly speeches delivered at the UNGA and the aforementioned set of possible explanations.

Table 3. OLS regression results on declaratory regionalism

	Model 1	Model 2
Domestic Stability	-0.0001 (0.0129)	-0.0009 (0.0132)
External Stability	0.7818 (0.6215)	0.8424 (0.7026)
Presidential Elections	0.0365 (0.6215)	0.1589 (0.6299)
Leftist President	1.3661** (0.5649)	1.2414** (0.6194)
Regime Launch	0.0264 (0.5801)	-0.0465 (0.5864)
Confidence in the Government	-	0.0038 (0.0146)
Economic Growth	-	0.0499 (0.0693)
Presidential Statement		-0.8416 (0.5607)
R ²	0.04	0.05
F Statistic	1.73 (df=5/203)	1.49 (df=8/200)

Standard errors are reported in parentheses.

*, **, *** indicate significance at the 90%, 95% and 99% level, respectively.

The first model tests for H1 (domestic crises), H2 (international disputes), H3 (presidential elections), H5 (regime ideology) and H6 (regime launch). The second model includes the variables “confidence in the government” and “economic growth” as annual growth rate reported by World Bank statistics, to test for H4, and also includes a control for the years when the president does not deliver the speech.

In both, only the fact of the president being leftist is statistically significant, being the effect of presidential ideology slightly lower in Model 2. On average, presidents refer to the region 4.7 times in each speech they deliver to the UNGA. Being a leftist president accounts for a significant increase of around 1.3 allusions to the region, which is a considerable difference if compared to the mean.

Amongst the other factors included in the models, the test of instability as a factor triggering a regionalist discourse shows that at least as measured here, internal and external security considerations do not bear any impact upon presidential speeches. This does not discard the subaltern regionalist hypothesis, which suggests that governments turn to the region under conditions of domestic instability, but rather explains why presidents sometimes talk about regionalism in contexts that are not straightforwardly propitious neither for cooperation nor integration.

Although the explanatory power of the models is significantly limited, the fact that regime ideology stands out as the best explanation for declarationist practices is an interesting finding, since a link to the integration literature is not easily made. Ernst Haas, the founding father of neofunctionalist integration theory, was reluctant to concede any role to ideology when writing on the European Communities in the 1950s. Instead, he considered ideology as “merely a mood, an ambiance that remains compatible with the attenuated national consciousness” in Europe (Haas 1958: xxix). In the discipline of International Relations, the end of the Cold War further discredited theorizing ideology. Our findings suggest that ideology may indeed play a role in regionalism, or at the very least in the making of regionalist speeches in Latin America.

The idea of a common Latin American identity, as stated above, has transcended two centuries from Simon Bolívar to Chávez’s Bolivarianism and is still a matter of passionate discussion among leftist intellectuals (Beverley 2011; Moreiras 1998). Over time, presidents have appropriated it for different projects, but its major characteristic remained being a marked feature of leftist discourse in the region, associated with the attempt to limit US-influence. In addition to this long-standing tradition, the upsurge in regional dynamism Latin America witnessed in the first decade of the new millennium was seen as closely connected to the rise of a ‘new left’ (Weyland et.al. 2010; Levitzky and Roberts 2013) that emphasized the necessity to move away from the failing model of economic neoliberalism (Rodríguez-Garavito et. al. 2008, 5, 9).

Having said so, it is worth noting that leftist governments in the region have not built strong institutions leading to deeper integration. Recent creations such as UNASUR and ALBA were distinctly leftist projects, though considerable progress in various policy areas notwithstanding, both organizations are fundamentally intergovernmental. What is more, “neo-liberal” or “rightist” governments had implemented their own kind of regionalism before, leading to similar – if not better – results: MERCOSUR, for instance, was created at the apex of neo-liberalism in the region. Therefore, it seems the tendency of leftist politicians to make more references to the region in their speeches has led to “tensions between ideology and pragmatism” in Latin American regionalism (Gardini 2011, 236). This apparent contradiction between leftist regional discourse and poor integration was noticed by Dabène (2012), who suggested that it may be explained by the limited room for manoeuvre of post-neoliberal leftist governments vis-à-vis societal actors and the greater flexibility of presidential summits, that allowed them to manage regional governance pragmatically.

Within the leftist camp, those most radical in rhetoric and action were criticized most openly for being populist whilst not achieving concrete results (Castañeda 2006; Villalobos 2004). However, the relation between a “radical”, “populist” left led by Hugo Chávez and including, inter alia, Rafael Correa and Evo Morales, and a “moderate” left (exemplarily the Chilean Concertación under Ricardo Lagos and Michele Bachelet, Brazil’s Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva) has been complementary rather than antithetical (see Ellner 2012).

In terms of policy strategy, the finding that ideology impacts on the use of declarationism at the UNGA is thus in accordance with Sanahuja’s claim that a defining cleavage exists between “post-liberal” (leftist) and “neo-liberal” (rightist) regionalisms, the first being characterized, among other things, by an appealing narrative component with stronger presence in the political discourse. The Latin-Americanist discourse notwithstanding, three distinct features of the ‘new left’ made it more keen to discursive regionalism: First, the prominence of civil society is a common characteristic in the new leftism that lends itself to using the popular stage for declarationism, including regarding regional integration. Second, the general reliance of leftist governments on direct forms of political representation rather than on bureaucratic structures (Lomnitz 2006) further underscores the value of the public stage for the left. Third, the scope of areas of cooperation envisaged by post-liberal regionalism – across social, political, military and economic policies – is far more suitable to the broad agenda of the ‘new left’. While declaratory regionalism should serve right and leftist governments equally as a low-risk instrument of moderate cost at the most to creating a stable regional

environment, the neoliberals' more limited commercialist agenda may have provided fewer opportunities.

Moreover, one may argue, it was the deliberate choice of the centre-right to abstain from discursive regionalism as such could antagonize the US as long as it is not couched in hemispheric terms. This may explain the temporal coincidence between post-liberal regionalism (Sanahuja 2009), post-hegemonic regionalism (Riggirozzi and Tussie 2012) and the particular understanding of regionalism of the so-called 'pink tide' of Latin American leftist presidents (Gardini 2011).

The rhetoric of integration appears to follow primarily an intramural logic. Writing on the role of ideology in Latin American foreign policy, Gardini claimed that it "serves the interests of politicians and the media and nourishes civil society's sense of belonging to the great Latin American family" (2011: 246). Declaratory regionalism then likely reflects the ideological self-conception and political calculus of leftist politicians who see their countries as forming part of a broader region, to which they naturally refer in their foreign policy discourses at the UNGA.

6. Conclusions

The paper set out to shed light on the often-noted phenomenon of Latin America's declaratory regionalism; that is, the persistence of rhetorical affirmations of regional integration. Making statements and non-binding commitments was of striking significance in the speeches Latin American presidencies delivered at the annual conventions of the UN General Assembly. Variation in the use of discursive regionalism between actors and across time, we argued in sections 3 and 4, resembles patterns in actual regional policy strategies. Therefore, unpacking the phenomenon of declaratory regionalism may offer valuable clues regarding regionalism in practice.

The results of our linear regression model can only serve as a signpost, yet they offer an interesting insight well in line with existing scholarship on Latin American international politics. The relevance of regime ideology, which is the only factor that has a statistically significant impact in the model, may not come to the surprise of Latin Americanists. Nevertheless, it is a neglected issue in theories on regionalism and regional integration. We proposed several possible explanations relating regime ideology to discursive regionalism at the UNGA, which further research may scrutinize.

References

- Ayoob, Mohammed. 1998. "Subaltern Realism: International Relations Theory Meets the Third World." In *International Relations Theory and the Third World*, edited by Stephanie G. Neuman, 31–54. St. Martin's Press.
- Beverly, John. 2011. *Latinamericanism after 9/11*. Post-Contemporary Interventions. Durham [NC]: Duke University Press.
- Burges, Sean W. 2015. "Revisiting Consensual Hegemony: Brazilian Regional Leadership in Question." *International Politics* 52 (2): 193–207. doi:10.1057/ip.2014.43.
- Buzan, Barry, and Ole Wæver. 2003. *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Castañeda, Jorge. 2006. "Latin America's Two Left Wings." *Newsweek (Atlantic Edition)* 147 (2): 35.
- Christensen, Steen Fryba. 2007. "The Influence of Nationalism in Mercosur and in South America: Can the Regional Integration Project Survive?" *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional* 50 (1): 139–58.
- Corrales, Javier, and Richard E. Feinberg. 1999. "Regimes of Cooperation in the Western Hemisphere: Power, Interests, and Intellectual Traditions." *International Studies Quarterly* 43 (1): 1–36.
- Dabène, Olivier. 2009. *The Politics of Regional Integration in Latin America: Theoretical and Comparative Explorations*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Domínguez, Jorge. 2003. *Boundary Disputes in Latin America*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace.
- . 2007. "International Cooperation in Latin America: The Design of Regional Institutions by Slow Accretion." In *Crafting Cooperation: Regional International Institutions in Comparative Perspective*, edited by Amitav Acharaya and A.I. Johnston, 83–128. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ellner, Steve. 2012. "The Distinguishing Features of Latin America's New Left in Power The Chávez, Morales, and Correa Governments." *Latin American Perspectives* 39 (1): 96–114.
- Feinberg, Richard E. 2006. "Presidential Mandates and Ministerial Institutions: Summitry of the Americas, the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)." *The Review of International Organizations* 1 (1): 69–94.
- Flemes, Daniel, and Leslie Wehner. 2015. "Drivers of Strategic Contestation: The Case of South America." *International Politics* 52 (2): 163–77. doi:10.1057/ip.2014.45.
- Gardini, Gian Luca. 2011. "Unity and Diversity in Latin American Visions of Regional Integration." In *Latin American Foreign Policies: Between Ideology and Pragmatism*, edited by Gian Luca Gardini and Peter W. Lambert, 235–54. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Garzón, Jorge. 2015. "Multipolarity and the Future of Regionalism: Latin America and Beyond." *GIGA Working Paper Series* 264: 1–32.
- Ghosn, Faten, Glenn Palmer, and Stuart A. Bremer. 2004. "The MID3 Data Set, 1993-2001: Procedures, Coding Rules, and Description." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 21 (2): 133–54.
- Haas, Ernst B. 1958. *The Uniting of Europe; Political, Social, and Economic Forces, 1950-1957*. Stanford University Press.
- Hettne, Björn. 2005. "Regionalism and World Order." In *Global Politics of Regionalism: Theory and Practice*, edited by Mary Farrell, Björn Hettne, and Luk van Langenhove. London: Pluto Press.

- Krippendorff, Klaus. 2004. *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*. Sage.
- Levitsky, Steven, and Kenneth M. Roberts. 2013. *The Resurgence of the Latin American Left*. JHU Press.
- Lima, M.R.S. 2013. "Realizações Interamericanas: A Nova Agenda Sul-Americana E O Brasil." *Lua Nova* 90: 167–201.
- Llanos, Mariana, and Leiv Marsteintredet, eds. 2010. *Presidential Breakdowns in Latin America: Causes and Outcomes of Executive Instability in Developing Democracies*. 1st ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lomnitz, Claudio. 2006. "Latin America's Rebellion: Will the New Left Set a New Agenda?" *Boston Review*.
- Malamud, Andrés. 2005. "Mercosur Turns 15: Between Rising Rhetoric and Declining Achievement." *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 18 (3): 421–36.
- Malamud, Andres. 2005. "Presidential Diplomacy and the Institutional Underpinnings of MERCOSUR: An Empirical Examination." *Latin American Research Review* 40 (1): 138–64.
- Malamud, Andrés, and Gian Luca Gardini. 2012. "Has Regionalism Peaked? The Latin American Quagmire and Its Lessons." *The International Spectator* 47 (1): 116–33.
- Malamud, Andrés, and Luis Schenoni. 2015. "Neo-Liberal Institutionalism and Neofunctionalism in Latin American Security." In *Routledge Handbook of Latin American Security*, edited by David Mares and Arie Kacowicz. London, New York: Routledge.
- Moniz Bandeira, Luiz Alberto. 2006. "O Brasil E a América Do Sul." In *Relações Internacionais Do Brasil: Temas E Agendas*, edited by Enrique Altemani and Antonio Carlos Lessa, 1:267–97. São Paulo: Saraiva.
- Montecinos, Verónica. 1996. "Ceremonial Regionalism, Institutions and Integration in the Americas." *Studies In Comparative International Development* 31 (2): 110–23. doi:10.1007/BF02719330.
- Moreiras, Alberto. 1998. "Global Fragments: A Second Latinamericanism." In *The Cultures of Globalization*, edited by Frederic Jameson and Masao Miyoshi. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Morgan, Patrick M. 1997. "Regional Security Complexes and Regional Orders." In *Regional Orders: Building Security in a New World*, edited by David Lake and Patrick Morgan. University Park Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Neuendorf, Kimberly A. 2002. *The Content Analysis Guidebook*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications.
- Nolte, Detlef. 2011. "Regional Powers and Regional Governance." In *Regional Powers and Regional Orders*, edited by Nadine Godehardt and Dirk Nabers, 49–67. Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge.
- O'Donnell, Guillermo A. 1994. "Delegative Democracy." *Journal of Democracy* 5 (1): 55–69.
- Oelsner, Andrea. 2005. *International Relations in Latin America: Peace and Security in the Southern Cone*. New York: Routledge.
- Onuki, Janina. 2006. "O Brasil E a Construção Do Mercosul." In *Relações Internacionais Do Brasil: Temas E Agendas*, 1:299–320. São Paulo: Saraiva.
- Pérez Liñan, Aníbal S. 2010. *Presidential Impeachment and the New Political Instability in Latin America*. 1st pbk. ed. Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Riggiozzi, Pía, and Diana Tussie, eds. 2012. *The Rise of Post-Hegemonic Regionalism*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Rodríguez-Garavito, César, Patrick Barrett, and Daniel Chávez. 2008. "Utopia Reborn? Introduction to the Study of the New Latin American Left." In *The New Latin American Left: Utopia Reborn?*. London: Pluto Press.
- Rojas Aravena, Francisco. 2010. "La Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos Y Caribeños: ¿Una Opción Viable Para Consolidar El Multilateralismo Latinoamericano?" *Foreign Affairs Latinoamérica* 10 (3): 1–8.
- Sanahuja, José Antonio. 2009. "Del 'regionalismo Abierto' Al 'regionalismo Post-Liberal': Crisis Y Cambio En La Integración Regional En América Latina Y El Caribe." In *Anuario de La Integración de América Latina Y El Gran Caribe*, edited by Laneydi Martínez, Lázaro Peña, and Mariana Vázquez, 7:11–54. Buenos Aires: CRIES.
- Schenoni, Luis. 2015. "The Brazilian Rise and the Elusive South American Balance." *GIGA Working Paper Series* 269: 1–32.
- Shugart, Matthew Soberg, and John M. Carey. 1992. *Presidents and Assemblies: Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics*. Cambridge [England] ; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Teixeira, Carlos Gustavo Poggio. 2012. *Brazil, the United States, and the South American Subsystem: Regional Politics and the Absent Empire*. Lexington Books.
- Tussie, Diana. 2009. "Latin America: Contrasting Motivations for Regional Projects." *Review of International Studies* 35: 169–88.
- Villalobos, Joaquín. 2004. "Entre La Religiosidad Y El Realismo Político." *Semana*, 19 December 2004.
- Weiffen, Brigitte, Leslie Wehner, and Detlef Nolte. 2013. "Overlapping Regional Security Institutions in South America: The Case of OAS and UNASUR." *International Area Studies Review* 16 (4): 370–89.
- Weyland, Kurt Gerhard, Raúl L. Madrid, and Wendy Hunter, eds. 2010. *Leftist Governments in Latin America: Successes and Shortcomings*. Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Author contacts:

Nicole Jenne

Department of Political & Social Sciences

European University Institute

Via dei Roccettini 9

I-50014 San Domenico di Fiesole (FI)

Email: nicole.jenne@eui.eu

Luis Schenoni

University of Notre Dame

Department of Political Science

217 O'Shaughnessy Hall

Notre Dame, IN 46556

Email: llschenoni@gmail.com